

St. Mary's Catholic Church

Parish Pastoral Council Constitution

Article I: Purpose and Function

Section 1: The Parish Pastoral Council shall be the instrument through which a representative body of the People of God, that is St. Mary's Parish, in a relationship of shared responsibility with the Pastor, enables the parish to experience itself as a community of faith called to proclaim the Good News of God's Kingdom present among us.

Section 2: The St. Mary's Parish Pastoral Council strives to fulfill its purpose by:

- Prayerfully discerning the needs of the parish community
- Serving as a vehicle for constructive dialogue with the parish community
- Serving as a consultative body to the Pastor
- Collaborating with the Pastor to formulate policies concerning parish and pastoral matters consistent with faith and morals, civil and church law, and Archdiocesan policy
- Identifying and calling forth the gifts and talents of the members of the parish community
- Developing and maintaining a mission statement which embraces the total life and mission of the parish
- Establishing clear and concise goals and objectives based on the parish mission statement and the emerging needs of the parish community
- Cooperating with and effectively implementing Archdiocesan policies and directives
- Coordinating, encouraging, and promoting every apostolic activity within the parish through which the parish community discharges its common responsibility to make the Gospel message known

Article II: Membership

Section 1: The St. Mary's Parish Pastoral Council shall consist of 13⁶ voting members

Section 2: Every person who is a Catholic, eighteen (18) years or older, and a registered member of St. Mary's Parish is eligible to serve as a member of the Council.

Section 3: ^{President} The Pastor, ^{no} School Principal, ^{no} Director of Religious Ed, ^{no} Liturgy Coordinator, and ^{no} Youth Minister are ex officio, nonvoting members of the Parish Pastoral Council. ^{3-year, 2, 1, 1} ^{limited}

Section 4: The Chairpersons or the Liaisons of the Finance Council, Stewardship Commission, Maintenance Commission, School Commission, Faith Formation Commission, Liturgy Commission, and the Youth Commissions are ex officio, ^{no} voting members of the Parish Pastoral Council.

Section 5: Three other members of the Parish Pastoral Council shall be appointed by the Pastor.

Section 6: Three members of the Parish Pastoral Council shall be elected by the parishioners of St. Mary's Parish.

Article III: Elections and Terms of Office

- Section 1: The term of office for all members of the Parish Pastoral Council shall be three years beginning on July 1. No member shall serve more than two (2) consecutive terms.
- Section 2: One appointed member and one elected member shall be chosen annually in the spring.
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- Section 3: Any term of office that cannot be completed by a Council member shall be filled by appointment of the Pastor after consultation with St. Mary's Parish Pastoral Council. This person shall complete the unexpired term of the member.

Article IV; Officers

- Section 1: At the first meeting of the St. Mary's Parish Pastoral Council following the general election, the members of the Council shall elect a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Secretary from their own membership. These officers, together with the Pastor, shall constitute the Executive Committee. The Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Secretary shall serve a one-year term.
- Section 2: The Chairperson shall have the following duties:
- To call and chair all meetings of the Council
 - To oversee all activities of the Council
 - To convene the Executive Committee in order to prepare Council meeting agendas and when special assistance or decisions are required on parish business.
- Section 3: The Vice-Chairperson shall have the following duties:
- To chair meetings in the absence of the Chairperson
 - To assist the Chairperson in overseeing Council's activities
 - To succeed the Chairperson in case of resignation or disqualification
- Section 4: The Secretary shall have the following duties:
- To maintain written records of minutes of all Council meetings
 - To maintain an attendance record of all Council members
 - To maintain a current record of the names, address, e-mail, and telephone numbers of all Council members
 - To distribute prior to Council meetings the agenda of the forthcoming meeting and the minutes of the previous meeting.

Article V: Areas of Ministry

- Section 1: The St. Mary's Parish Pastoral council is assisted in its duties by the parish commissions which are categorized within seven areas of ministry
- Finance Council
 - Stewardship Commission
 - Maintenance Commission
 - School Commission
 - Faith Formation Commission
 - Liturgy Commission
 - Youth Commission

- Section 2: In each Commission, standing committees are established to assist in accomplishing the objectives for each ministry area.
- Section 3: Each Commission shall develop its own bylaws that complement the St. Mary's Parish Pastoral Council as well as Archdiocesan directives.
- Section 4: Each Commission should regularly submit a brief summary report to the council on the status of goals, objectives, and activities of the commissions and its committees.
- Section 5: Special ad hoc committees may be established from time to time by agreement of Council membership to meet specific objectives. Such ad hoc committees may be established as defined by the Council.
- Section 6: The Pastor and other parish staff may be members of a particular commission but they are not to be the representative on the Pastoral Council.

Article VI: Meetings

- Section 1: Regular meeting of the St. Mary's Parish Pastoral Council shall be held ~~from four (4)~~
~~to six (6)~~ ¹² time each year.
- Section 2: Other meetings of the Council may be called by the Chairperson or Pastor upon written or verbal notice being given to all members of the council at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to the date of the meeting.
- Section 3: Proposals by any parishioner may be submitted to the Council by presenting the proposal, in writing, to the Executive Committee at least two(2) weeks in advance of the regular Council meeting. Disposition of the proposal follows the normal procedure for new business for the Council.

Article VII: Decision-Making

- Section 1: The decision-making process of the St. Mary's Parish Pastoral Council shall be by consensus. If necessary, a vote may be taken if a consensus is not reached.
- Section 2: All decisions and actions of the St. Mary's Parish Pastoral Council must be ratified by the Pastor.
- A record of the Pastor's ratification must be inserted in the minutes
 - Withholding ratification would involve the following:
 1. Faith or morals
 2. General Church Law
 3. Archdiocesan Policy as established by the Archbishop and the duly recognized Commission/Councils with which he consults.
 4. The pastoral and administrative needs of the parishioners.
 5. The general good order of the parish
 - Upon explaining his reasons, the pastor will recommend that the decision be reconsidered.

Article VIII: Nominations and Election

Section 1: In January the Council Chairperson in consultation with the Pastor and the other Council members, appoints a Nomination Committee. *of parish members*

Section 2: The Nomination Committee will present the names of persons nominated to the Parish Pastoral Council in accord with a process and procedure approved by the Council and ratified by the Pastor.

Section 3: Newly elected Council members shall assume their duties at the first meeting of the fiscal year.

Article IX: Amendments and Revisions

Section 1: This Constitution may be amended and/or revised at any regular or special meeting of the St. Mary's Parish Pastoral Council.

Section 2: Amendments and revisions must be presented in writing to all members of the council at least ten(10) days prior to any meeting. Any amendment or revision submitted to the Council shall be discussed at the meeting at which it is presented but not formally accepted until the next regular meeting.